



STATE OF MONTANA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS YOUTH COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS

PAT SEARCH PROCEDURES

A pat search involves a manual search by officers of a fully clothed youth. This search can be conducted on either a routine or random basis in any location. When conducting a pat down search, incident to arrest, place youth in handcuffs. If pat down search is routine or random, select most appropriate search technique.

Suggested Search Techniques:

Wall Search:

Place youth against the wall with their back to the officer, arms extended out to the side from youth's body, and palms facing away from the wall. Feet should be against the wall in such a manner that the youth's heels are touching and the feet are parallel with the wall. Support youth against wall by placing one arm vertically between shoulder blades. With free hand conduct pat search of free hand side of youth's body. Conduct search as prescribed in step 3. Switch support arm and complete search of youth's body.

Kneeling Search:

Place youth in handcuffs. Advise youth to assume a kneeling position with ankles crossed. Support the youth from behind by placing a hand on either the right or the left shoulder. With free hand (conduct search on one-half of youth's body). Switch support hands and complete search of the other side of the youth's body. (Conduct search as prescribed in step 3).

Prone Search:

Place youth in handcuffs. If youth is not already in a prone position, assist them to a kneeling position, then to a prone position. Conduct a search of one side of the youth's body using one hand to roll the youth to a supported position as may be necessary to search the youth entirely. Once you have completed one side of the youth, switch sides and complete search. (Conduct search as prescribed in step 3). With officer safety in mind, search prone youth's legs in the following manner: place your body horizontally across youth's buttocks. Slide your body down the legs so that your weight secures the legs as you conduct your search. Once the officer has completed a search of the legs, slide your weight back toward buttocks before returning to your feet. Officer should use his/her forearm to protect him/her from a potential kick from youth's legs.

The general guidelines for conducting a pat search are as follows:

1. Inform the youth that he or she is to be searched.
2. Instruct the youth to empty all pockets and remove any coats, hats or other outer clothing items and place them on the floor, ground, table or vehicle hood.
3. Instruct the youth to move out of reach of the items.
4. Instruct the youth to face away, place hands against a wall or other surface, spread the legs shoulder width, and move feet back from the surface 3-4 feet.
5. Move behind the youth, then:
 - A. Carefully examine the shirt collar.
 - B. Run hands over the youth's shoulders, down the outside of the arms to the shirt cuffs, and carefully examine the shirt cuffs.
 - C. Move hands up the inside of the arms to the armpits.
 - D. Run hands down the youth's shirtfront, carefully checking the pockets.
 - E. Move fingers around the inside of the waistband, feeling for any objects, which may be concealed there, or behind the belt.
 - F. From the waistline, move hands down the youth's buttocks.
 - G. Put both hands on one leg at a time, and run them carefully down each leg, being certain to check each trouser cuff.
 - H. Move hands over the youth's lower abdomen and crotch carefully.
 - I. Instruct the youth to extend one foot at a time, backward, and then inspect each sock and shoe for concealed articles.
6. When the search is completed, instructs the youth to remain in his/her stance against the wall or other surface, them carefully check each item that the youth removed from his/her pockets.
7. Items that the youth is allowed to have in his/her possession shall then be returned (If transporting an arrested youth, items that can be used as potential weapons shall not be returned. They shall remain at the arresting site or placed in a receptacle and transported to the Detention Center with the youth).

Follow the same procedures for female youths, with particular attention to items that may be concealed in the brassiere.

All pat searches should be performed by officers of the same gender as the youth whenever possible. Support personnel should not be called on to perform searches unless they are trained in this procedure. In an emergency, and if no same gender officer is available to perform the pat search of a youth, the opposite gender officer can proceed. It is advisable for officers conducting opposite gender pat searches to locate a witness as a protection against allegations of an improperly conducted search. The opposite gender officer, however, needs to use common sense and quit the pat search if the youth gets visibly upset or in some way evidences trauma.
